

Memo

To: Board of Selectmen
From: William G. Keegan, Jr., Town Administrator
CC: Assistant Town Administrator
Date: August 25, 2011
Re: Town Administrator's Report for August 11, 2011

1. **New Veteran's Agent**- I am pleased to report that I have selected a new Veteran's Agent for the Town of Dedham. His name is William J. Aitken and is a resident of Dedham. Mr. Aitken is a six year veteran of the U.S. Marine Corp Reserve and was on active duty during Desert Storm and stationed at Cherry Point, North Carolina. He assisted in the deployment of our troops to the Middle East. Mr. Aitken has been offered a conditional offer of employment pending final approvals associated with his background check and medical evaluation. If everything goes as planned, he will be starting work in Dedham on August 22, 2011. I do plan to have in to be introduced to the Board at the Board's first meeting in September.
2. **Dedham Square Improvement Project Communications Initiative (DSIPCI)** - is now in full swing. Meetings were held two weeks ago with businesses and residents on July 26 and July 28 to solicit input on how the town and contractor can help to reduce construction impacts during this phase of the project. Comments and ideas that were made at these meetings are posted (will be posted Monday or Tuesday- August 8 or 9) on the Town's web site. The Town will be using various methods of social media to stay connected with businesses and residents though the course of the project. Services such as Facebook, Twitter, and e-mail will all be utilized. On August 4th of last week, team members traveled to Reading, MA where we met with Town Manager, Town Engineer and the Director of the Chamber of Commerce to evaluate their best practices on how they managed the construction of their recently renovated downtown project. This project has many similarities to the Dedham project that include the same design and engineering team, the scope and size of the project are similar as well the socio-economic make-up of the communities. Reading provided us with some helpful insight and has offered to come down and meet with our residents and

business community to provide them with some perspective on how the project proceeded. One of the most significant results of Reading's efforts was that despite the fact that this project started during the "Great Recession", Reading did not lose any businesses due to construction but gained 17 new businesses during and after the construction was completed. It was also evident to our team that there was some significant new investment made by property owners in the newly revitalized downtown Reading area. Attached is a report prepared by Karen O'Connell that helps to describe what learned that day.

3. **Health Insurance Reform-** This past week the Governor's Administration and Finance Office released the new regulations regarding the Municipal Health Insurance Reform. We will be reporting back to the Board following our evaluation and following our meeting with the West Suburban Health Group in September. Because Dedham is part of this group purchasing consortium, there are some different applications of the law that we are obligated to follow and we want to be fully apprised of what the new law means to the community and our employees.
4. **Solar Project-** Installation of the Photovoltaic Cells has been completed! We are now producing electricity at Town Hall and at the High School. On August 2, N-Star approved the connections and allowed us to start producing our own energy. The meters at both locations are known as "net" meters; which means that if we produce more than we consume, we will sell that excess energy back to the utility company. While that may not happen on a regular basis, we are proud of the fact that the amount of electricity produced at both locations should be approximately equal to the amount of electricity used by Town Hall. This will help reduce energy costs and also help us live up to our "Green Community" designation by reducing the amount of Carbon Dioxide emissions.

Residents can see the amount of energy produced in real time by visiting www.solrenview.com. There will be a link to Solrenview on the Town of Dedham's website.

5. **New Financial Software** -Since 2008 the Town has been receiving Management Letters from our auditors related to the age and capabilities of our data processing software. The specific areas in need of review included general ledger, billing and collection, assessing and schools. We recognized this need and developed a strategy to evaluate and test municipal systems to determine the best combination of functionality and price for serving our residents. I'm pleased to announce that we have concluded negotiations and signed agreements with New World Systems and Point Software to install new municipal software for the Town. The new system was chosen from over 15 municipal software packages evaluated over the last year. Department Heads, IT, the Schools, Assessors and other end users were involved in the evaluation process and all unanimously approved of the new system.

Aside from advantages related to productivity and technology, we were able to purchase the package through the State Bid List, avoiding the need to issue an RFP. This made the process much quicker and ensured we received exactly what we required without the risk associated with purchasing software using a bidding process (could end up with a very inexpensive package that didn't meet our needs). We contracted with the CPA firm Roselli, Clark and Associates to analyze the software in a live environment and inquire of existing customers as to their opinion and satisfaction with the system. As a result of that analysis Roselli, Clark and Associates determined that the product has been functioning adequately in other communities for many years and should be able to accomplish the processing tasks required of it by the Town.

The package will include a new financial management suite which not only addresses our need to accurately and transparently maintain the Town's general ledger, but also facilitates:

- Budget preparation and management,
- Revenue and cash receipting,
- Project accounting,
- GASB reporting and
- Bank reconciliation.

The software will also facilitate the billing and collection process for

- Real estate,
- Personal property, and
- Motor vehicle and boat excise

It automates processes such as creating (and accounting for) abatements and has features which will assist with purchasing and contract accounting.

In addition to financial capabilities, the package includes modules for Human Resource Management and Benefits Administration. An exciting new feature is the online presentment of allowable public tax records so residents and tax service companies can view their tax bill online.

Point Software is based in East Longmeadow, MA and has been providing municipal software focused on tax collection to cities and towns in the Commonwealth for over 22 years. New World Systems has been a leading provider of municipal financial software for over 30 years and has over 1,500 customer's nation-wide.

*** FYI – List of Packages Considered ***

The following is a list of Municipal Software Packages considered before choosing New World:

Softright/Sumaria

Vadar Systems

MIP

UniFund BudgetSense

Unifund's Revenue Sense
Munis
Patriot's Collec tPro
KVS
DataNational
Kelley & Ryan's "K2"
Customized Data Services
Inhance
Sungard Public Sector
WTI Systems (aka Data National) / Fundware

The change- over to the system will be conducted over the course of the next year. When system modules become functional, we will provide an opportunity for Board Members to see the new capabilities of this system. I want to thank Mariellen Murphy, William Ralph and Robin Reyes and the members of their staff for spearheading this effort along with Assistant School Superintendent for Business Michael LaFrancesca and the members of his staff for their valuable input and assistance in helping to complete this selection process.

6. **National Night** – Police Chief Michael J. D’Entremont announced on August 4th that he was recommending several commendations to the members of his staff who successfully completed the National Night Out Campaign. (Commendation Attached)
7. **Summary of Rubbish and Recycling Costs-** I am pleased to report to the Board and to the Community that implementation of our new Trash and Recycling Program has proven to be very successful over the course of the past three years. During that time frame we have stabilized the cost of trash disposal and we have more than doubled our recycling rates. One of the most significant findings is that from Fiscal Year 2008 to Fiscal Year 2011 the Town has reduced the amount of tons of trash disposed at the Waste Management Facility in Millbury from 10,344 tons in FY 2008 to 6,919 tons in FY 2011 or a reduction of 33% overall (See the attached chart).